

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 EB-11 SIL-01 LAB-06 COME-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8920

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 8755

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SGEN, PBOR, MX

SUBJ: ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS: RABASA CALLS FOR BRACERO AGREEMENT.

REF: MEXICO 8699; MEXICO 8700

1. SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS OF MEXICO CITY PRESS (HERALDO AND EXCELSIOR) REPORTED IN NOVEMBER 22 PRESS AN INTERVIEW WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA DURING ATTENDANCE BOGOTA CONFERENCE. RABASA REPORTEDLY CALLED ONCE MORE FOR "SOLUTION OF MEXICAN MIGRATORY WORKER PROBLEM" THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUOTA OF 300,000 PERSONS. HE CITED AS PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF GOM THE SOCIAL AND JURIDICAL STATUS OF MEXICAN WORKERS IN THE U.S. HE CALLED FOR HUMANE TREATMENT FOR THESE WORKERS AS WELL AS A FAIR SALARY TO ALLOW THEM A DECENT LIVING. HE NOTED THAT MAIN OPPOSITION TO A NEW BRACERO AGREEMENT LIES WITH U.S. LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND CHICANOS. RABASA INSISTED, HOWEVER, THAT MEXICAN WORKERS PLAY AN IMPORTANT AND NECESSARY ROLE IN SOLUTION OF U.S. LABOR PROBLEMS. HE SAID AGREEMENT SHOULD INCLUDE DEFENSE OF MEXICAN WORKERS BY MEXICAN CONSULAR OFFICERS IN U.S. COURTS.

2. IN A NOVEMBER 23 EDITORIAL EXCELSIOR SHOWED LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR RABASA'S POSITION ON BRACEROS, EXPRESSING SOME SKEPTICISM AS TO RABASA'S VIEW THAT MEXICAN WORKERS PLAYED ESSENTIAL ROLE IN
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U.S. LABOR MARKET. EDITORIAL ALSO NOTED THAT PROPOSALS RE CONS-

ULAR PROTECTION FOR MEXICAN WORKERS POSED DELICATE PROBLEMS. FINALLY, ARTICLE REASONED THAT WHATEVER OUTCOME OF RABASA INITIATIVES, "BRACERISMO" NOT A DESIRABLE SOLUTION FOR MEXICAN WORKERS. INSTEAD, MEXICO NEEDED INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT TO ABSORB ITS UNEMPLOYMENT. "MEXICO LOSES WITH BRACERISMO."

3. RADIO COMMENTARY NOVEMBER 21 SAID BRACERO QUESTION WILL BE DISCUSSED AT FORTHCOMING MEETING OF SECRETARY KISSINGER AND LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS.

4. COMMENT: COINCIDING WITH PRESS REPORTS RE ALLEGATIONS MADE BY MEXICAN CONSUL GENERAL IN EL PASO (SEE REFTELS), MOST RECENT RABASA STATEMENTS SEEM TO FIT PATTERN OF ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN BY GOM OFFICIALS IN MEDIA IN SUPPORT OF GOM INITIATIVES THIS SUBJECT. POINTS MADE IN EXCELSIOR EDITORIAL SEEM REASONABLE, AND TONE OF SKEPTICISM FROM THIS HIGHLY NATIONALISTIC SECTOR OF PRESS MAY GIVE PAUSE TO THOSE PRESSING FOR NEW BRACERO AGREEMENT.
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